

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following Listing of Claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): An end cap in combination with a paper tube, ~~the combination comprising wherein:~~

~~at~~ the paper tube ~~having an~~ comprises a plurality of inwardly extending flap flaps at an open end; and

~~an~~ the end cap ~~comprising~~ comprises:

a bottom wall having a peripheral edge; and

a sidewall extending from the peripheral edge of the bottom wall; ~~and~~

~~a channel~~ plurality of channels are provided in the sidewall, each for receiving and engaging one of the plurality of inwardly extending flap flaps; and

~~wherein~~ the end cap is adapted to be disposed within the open end of the paper tube such that it is selectively rotatable between:

a first position in which the plurality of inwardly extending flap ~~is~~ flaps are not received and engaged in the ~~channel~~ plurality of channels when at least a part of the end cap is disposed within the open end; and
a second position in which the plurality of inwardly extending flap ~~is~~ flaps are received and engaged in the ~~channel~~ plurality of channels.

Claim 2 (original): The combination according to claim 1 wherein the end cap further comprises an annular flange that extends from the sidewall, the flange having an outer diameter that is larger than an inner diameter of the paper tube.

Claim 3 (previously presented): The combination according to claim 1 wherein the bottom wall of the end cap further comprises a projection for facilitating rotation of the end cap within the open end of the paper tube.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The combination according to claim 1 wherein:
the paper tube has two opposing inwardly extending flaps at the open end; and
the sidewall of the end cap is provided with two channels for receiving and
engaging the two inwardly extending flaps when the end cap is disposed
in the open end of the paper tube in the second position.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The combination according to claim 1 wherein:
the paper tube has three equally spaced inwardly extending flaps at the open
end; and
the sidewall of the end cap is provided with three channels for receiving and
engaging the three equally spaced inwardly extending flaps when the end
cap is disposed in the open end of the paper tube in the second position.

Claim 6 (canceled)

Claim 7 (original): The combination according to claim 1 wherein at least a
portion of the sidewall proximal to the peripheral edge of the bottom wall
circumferentially contacts an inner surface of the paper tube when the end cap is
disposed in the open end of the paper tube.

Claim 8 (original): A method of closing an open end of a paper tube comprising:
forming an inwardly extending flap at the open end of the paper tube;
providing an end cap comprising:
a bottom wall having a peripheral edge;
a sidewall extending from the peripheral edge of the bottom wall; and
a channel provided in the sidewall for receiving and engaging the inwardly
extending flap;
inserting the end cap bottom wall first into the open end of the paper tube; and
rotating the end cap relative to the paper tube until the inwardly extending flap is
received in and engaged by the channel.

Claim 9 (original): The method according to claim 8 wherein the end cap further comprises an annular flange that extends from the sidewall, the flange having an outer diameter that is larger than an inner diameter of the paper tube.

Claim 10 (previously presented): The method according to claim 8 wherein the bottom wall of the end cap further comprises a projection for facilitating rotation of the end cap within the open end of the paper tube.

Claim 11 (original): A method of closing an open end of a paper tube comprising:
providing an end cap comprising:

- a bottom wall having a peripheral edge;
- a sidewall extending from the peripheral edge of the bottom wall, the
sidewall including a recessed area or opening for forming an
inwardly extending flap at the open end of the paper tube when the
end cap is disposed in the open end of the paper tube; and
- a channel provided in the sidewall for receiving and engaging the inwardly
extending flap;

inserting the end cap bottom wall first into the open end of the paper tube such
that a portion of the sidewall proximal to the peripheral edge of the bottom
wall circumferentially contacts an inner surface of the paper tube;
forming the inwardly extending flap; and
rotating the end cap relative to the paper tube until the inwardly extending flap is
received in and engaged by the channel.

Claim 12 (original): The method according to claim 11 wherein the end cap further comprises an annular flange that extends from the sidewall, the flange having an outer diameter that is larger than an inner diameter of the paper tube.

Claim 13 (previously presented): The method according to claim 11 wherein the bottom wall of the end cap further comprises a projection for facilitating rotation of the end cap within the open end of the paper tube.

Claim 14 (currently amended): An end cap for closing an open end of a paper tube having a plurality of inwardly extending flaps at the open end, the end cap comprising:

- a bottom wall having a peripheral edge;
- a sidewall extending from the peripheral edge of the bottom wall; and
- ~~a channel~~ plurality of channels provided in the sidewall, each for receiving and engaging ~~an one of the plurality of~~ inwardly extending flap flaps at the open end of the paper tube;

wherein the end cap is adapted to be disposed within the open end of the paper tube such that it is selectively rotatable between:

- a first position in which the plurality of inwardly extending ~~flap is~~ flaps are not received and engaged in the ~~channel~~ plurality of channels when at least a part of the end cap is disposed within the open end; and
- a second position in which the plurality of inwardly extending ~~flap is~~ flaps are received and engaged in the ~~channel~~ plurality of channels.

Claim 15 (original): The end cap according to claim 14 further comprising an annular flange that extends from the sidewall, the flange having an outer diameter that is larger than an inner diameter of the paper tube.

Claim 16 (original): The end cap according to claim 14 further comprising a skirt that extends from the flange and contacts an outer surface of the paper tube proximal to the open end.

Claim 17 (original): The end cap according to claim 14 wherein at least a portion of the channel has an arcuate contour.

Claim 18 (previously presented): A mailing tube comprising:
a paper tube having a plurality of inwardly extending flaps at a first end of the paper tube; and

a plastic end cap releasably securable to the first end of the paper tube, the end cap comprising:
a bottom wall having a peripheral edge;
a sidewall extending from the peripheral edge of the bottom wall; and
a plurality of channels provided in the sidewall for receiving and engaging the plurality of inwardly extending flaps;
wherein the plastic end cap is adapted to be disposed within the open end of the paper tube such that it is selectively rotatable between a first position in which the plurality of inwardly extending flaps are not received and engaged in the plurality of channels when at least a part of the end cap is disposed within the open end and a second position in which the plurality of inwardly extending flaps are received and engaged in the plurality of channels.

Claim 19 (original): The mailing tube according to claim 18 wherein at least a portion of the sidewall proximal to the peripheral edge of the bottom wall circumferentially contacts an inner surface of the paper tube.

Claim 20 (original): The mailing tube according to claim 18 wherein the end cap further comprises an annular flange that extends from the sidewall, the flange having an outer diameter that is larger than an inner diameter of the paper tube.

Claim 21 (canceled)

Claim 22 (previously presented): An end cap in combination with a paper tube, the combination comprising:

a paper tube having an inwardly extending flap at an open end, the inwardly extending flap having an inner side facing an interior portion of the paper tube and an outer side facing away from the interior portion of the paper tube; and

an end cap comprising:

a bottom wall having a peripheral edge; and

a sidewall extending from the peripheral edge of the bottom wall;
wherein the end cap receives and engages both the inner side and the outer side of the
inwardly extending flap when the end cap is disposed in the open end of the
paper tube, and
wherein the end cap is a unitary structure that comprises a hinged wing extending from
a top portion of the sidewall that can be moved from a first position where the
hinged wing does not contact the inwardly extending flap to a second position
where at least a portion of the hinged wing engages and contacts the outer side
of the inwardly extending flap.

Claim 23 (canceled)